DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 770 CE 045 008

TITLE	Coach to Succeed. A DITB Training Guide.
INSTITUTION	Distributive Industry Training Board, Manchester (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-903416-24-7
PUB DATE	[80]
NOTE	33p.
AVAILABLE FROM	British Association for Commerical and Industrial Education, 16 Park Crescent, London, England W1N 4AP (3.00 pounds).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Check Lists; *Employer Employee Relationship; Feedback; Foreign Countries; *Learning Processes; *Management Development; On the Job Training; *Personnel Management; Postsecondary Education; Reinforcement; Supervisors; *Training Methods
IDENTIFIERS	*Coaching

ABSTRACT

This booklet is intended to assist managers at all levels and in all types of firms in coaching employees of two types: those with managerial responsibilities or those being developed as managers. The principles and approaches described, however, are applicable to all levels of employees. Discussed in the individual sections of the guide are the following topics: the nature and purpose of coaching; coaching and learning; the context of coaching (who is coached and ways of taking and making coaching opportunities); stages in the coaching process (pre-coaching preparation, identification of improvement areas, procedures for action planning, techniques of progressing an assignment, and ways of rounding off an assignment); and skills involved in coaching (drawing out, attending, giving and receiving feedback, and developing coaching skills). Five figures and 11 checklists are also included. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED278770

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S Shapiro

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE 045 008

A DITB TRAINING GUIDE

Contents

	Page
Preface	2
Introduction	3
What is Coaching?	4
Why Coach?	6
Coaching and Learning	8
The Context of Coaching	12
Who is Coached?	12
Taking and Making Coaching Opportunities	13
The Coaching Process	15
Stages in the Coaching Assignment	15
Phase 1 – Pre-Coaching Preparation	16
Phase 2 – Identifying Improvement Areas	17
Phase 3 – Action Planning	18
Phase 4 – Progressing the Assignment	20
Phase 5 – Rounding it Off	21
The Skills Involved	23
The Main Skill Areas	23
Drawing Out	24
Attending	25
Giving and Receiving Feedback	26
Developing the Skills	28
Postscript	Inside Back Cover
Information	Inside Back Cover

ILLUSTRATIONS

		Page
Figures		
1	The Learning Cycle	9
2	Faculties for Learning	10
3	Learning from Experience	11
4	Stages in the Coaching Assignment	15
5	Coaching Styles	20
Checklists		
1	Reasons for Coaching	6
2	Priority Learners	12
3	Coaching Opportunities	14
4	Pre-Coaching Preparation	16
5	Identifying Improvement Areas	17
6	Action Planning	18
7	Progressing the Assignment	21
8	Rounding it Off	22
9	Drawing Out	25
10	Attending	26
11	Giving Receiving Feedback	27

Preface

This booklet is a practical guide to planned coaching for managers at all levels in all types of firm. It is a source of ideas, reference and *self*-development, concerned primarily with the coaching, *by* managers, of:

Those with managerial responsibilities;

Those being developed as managers, either for the first time, or in moving to more senior positions.

However, the principles of and approaches to coaching are equally applicable to all levels of employees.

More specifically, the guide seeks to increase awareness of the power and potential effect of coaching by:

Defining what is meant by coaching;

Examining the manager's role as coach;

Focusing attention on the opportunities for obtaining results through coaching;

Identifying, step by step, what is involved in the coaching process;

Exploring the skills and techniques involved;

Suggesting how they can be developed.

Overall, the intention is to encourage managers to make a positive effort to coach and coach well.

Introduction

Success today and Succession tomorrow! This surely is the aim of all businesses whatever their size or trade.

Planned, systematic, and skilled COACHING by managers is an important and practical tool for making the maximum use of the pool of experience and expertise in any firm – to the benefit of the manager coach, person being coached, and the organisation as a whole.

The good manager has always obtained results through coaching whether or not the manager called it that, or even realised what he or she was doing – let alone set out consciously to *exploit* it.

The term 'learner' is used for the person coached because it has the added advantage of drawing attention to the prime purpose of coaching – learning that is deliberately stimulated.

Remember the learner is not the only one to learn in the coaching process. Experience constantly shows that the coach most definitely learns as well!

What is Coaching?

Perhaps the most common association of the words 'coach' and 'coaching' is with sport. It is true that the sports coach can probably be more dictatorial than the business manager, and that the 'trainees' concerned, not only accept relentless authority, but positively seek and pay for the privilege.

Even so, there are many points of similarity between the sports coach and a manager as coach, not least the desire to produce a 'winning team'.

Both types of coach:

Deal essentially with the development of skill through practice;

Are concerned to analyse the components of particular skills, techniques, and the environment within which they operate in order to assist the learner;

Set increasingly challenging exercises;

Seek to identify problems or weaknesses to be remedied;

Are involved in spotting potential, building on strengths, and taking advantage of talent and opportunity.

In sport, as in business, no matter how important or skilled the coach, the real test is in the performance of the 'trainee'.

In business terms, therefore, a useful way to define coaching is:

"The process of the manager, by discussion and planned activity, helping someone to learn, to solve a problem or perform a task better than otherwise would be the case" and "The manager consciously using work as an opportunity for planned learning under guidance."

This defines coaching as a method of training aimed at improving current and future performance.

It therefore, points to the role of the manager in helping the learner to identify the factors preventing the achievement of full effectiveness, or those which characterise success – and to work out what to do about these.

The most important aspect of this definition is that coaching positively requires the direct involvement of the **manager** in the development of an individual, and that what takes place is a conscious and planned process.

The coaching approach requires more subtle and complex personal skills than may be realised. It is much more than the expert telling the novice about errors and how to correct them; more, too, than just a different name for 'on-the-job training', or an extension of 'performance appraisal', more, too, than the casual, occasional chat with the boss about how work is going.

Coaching is the use of a manager's power to elicit self-analysis by subordinates. This combines with the manager's own knowledge and insight to provide:

Self-understanding on the part of the learner;

Joint commitment to mutually accepted goals;

AND

A plan of action for achieving them.

"Every encounter between a superior and subordinate involves learning of some kind for the subordinate. (It should involve learning for the superior, too, but that is another matter.)

When the boss gives an order, asks for a job to be done, reprimands, praises, deals with a mistake, or takes any other action with a subordinate he is teaching them something . . .

The day-by-day experience on the job is so much more powerful that it tends to overshadow what the individual may learn in other settings."

D. McGregor "Human Side of Enterprise" 1960.

Why Coach?

Coaching is potentially the most powerful single influence, for good or otherwise, on the development of experienced managers, trainees, and the newly appointed. Checklist 1 looks at some of the advantages of coaching under a number of headings.

Checklist 1 Reasons for Coaching

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION	ADVANTAGES OF COACHING
BENEFITS FOR THE FIRM	Improved managerial performance. Development of potential. Improved relationships, especially boss/subordinate. Facilitation of change. Improved attitudes. Improved communications. Inexpensive in time and cost. Not dependent upon sophisticated equipment, premises. Does not require the release of key people from their jobs for protracted periods. Takes full advantage of the experience, expertise of existing managers.
BENEFITS FOR THE MANAGER	Manager is involved in the learner's training/development. Exercises skills – techniques critically important to the manager/coach's role, e.g. delegation, appraisal. Minimises 'risk' of, for example, delegation. Managers learn too, often about themselves. Managers can get more out of their own appraisals. Promotes common goals/purposes. Can provide a valuable pre-retirement role for the older manager.

Checklist 1 Reasons for Coaching

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION	ADVANTAGES OF COACHING
BENEFITS FOR THE LEARNER	Managers learn most by doing. Real, work-based priorities are tackled. Not dependent upon fixed dates venues of outside sources. No problems of 'transferring' new learning back to the work situation. Is ongoing and flexible. Often the only feasible or appropriate method of satisfying a particular need. Increases learner's self-confidence and self-awareness. Encourages self-reliance, self-development and self-motivation.

This is not to say that coaching is the magic solution. It is not. However, it *is* a powerful force for obtaining better results – success today, and better equipped managers for the future – succession tomorrow. It will help you, as manager, your subordinates, and the firm to succeed.

Coaching and Learning

Coaching is a prime method of developing the ability to learn from *experience*, and the coach will be that much more effective if he or she understands a little about **how people learn**.

Consider how a child learns to respect heat.

First The child touches the stove and it hurts **an actual experience**.

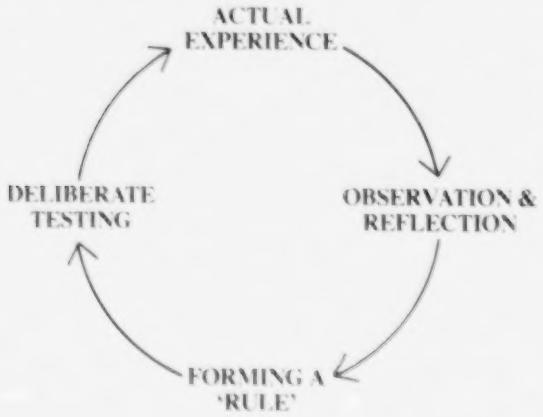
Second The child associates the pain with the stove – **observation** and thinks about the pain and the stove being connected – **reflection**.

Third The child begins to form a general rule like – 'Stoves hurt so keep away' – **forming a 'rule'**.

Fourth Eventually the child may cautiously approach the stove again and discover that it gets hotter with nearness – **deliberate testing** – the 'rule' is confirmed.

The experience will not be 'once and for all', because the child, like all of us, continually tests the concepts received in 'trying-out' (experience). Hence, later experience will perhaps show that an oven, fire, or bonfire also have the 'hurt' capacity – and this later experience will be reflected on and incorporated in the general rule. Thus the learning is continuously recurring, and can most usefully be regarded as a cycle.

Fig 1 The Learning Cycle



By starting from different standpoints two distinct methods of *organising* learning can be identified.

The first, **deductive learning**, starts by one being *given* the 'general rule', the theory, which we can 'test' in safe situations by various exercises. The hope is that we will then *actually* apply it in practice, and finally modify and perfect learning by reviewing and observing how we apply it.

This is the 'classroom' method of learning – using lectures, talks and the general way we were taught at school.

Difficulties can arise when it comes to changing that knowledge into skill and applying it in practice – the step between 'deliberate testing' (in the classroom) and 'actual experience' (at work).

However, in life, like the example of the child quoted previously, we mostly learn by **inductive** learning. We start with the actual experience and by reflecting on it we formulate a 'theory' which we test out and then use to modify our behaviour.

Why is all this important to the **coach**? In coaching, as in any method of promoting learning, it is vital that the learner not only undergoes a particular experience, but *is able to learn from that experience* instead of merely seeing each new experience in isolation. The role of the coach, therefore, is to:

- Provide the learner with *actual* experiences to stimulate *inductive* learning;
- Make *Deductive* learning more effective by helping to bridge the 'theory – practice' gap;
- Ensure that each stage of the learning cycle takes place, and is completed.

If effective *learning from experience* is to take place, then the learner, under the coach's direction, needs to develop three distinct faculties.

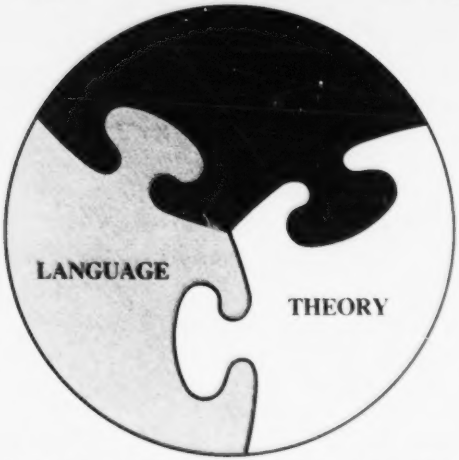
Figure 2 describes what these faculties refer to and what their implications for learning are.

Fig 2 Faculties for Learning

FACULTY	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
BEHAVIOUR	The practical skills possessed.	If 'behaviour' *alone* is developed, the learner is limited to being able to do the job now, but is low on understanding the 'why' of it – and unable to do things differently if situations change – will also find it difficult to learn for him/herself.
LANGUAGE	The ability to put forward ideas and observations.	If 'language' *alone* is developed, the learner becomes 'all talk and no action' – i.e. can talk about the job/task, but has no real understanding of it or practical skills in implementing it.
THEORY	A knowledge of the theory of something – a sort of mental framework.	If 'theory' *alone* is developed, the learner has no practical skills, and no ability to talk about the job.

The model in Figure 3 emphasises that the three areas are separate but inter-related, and complement each other to form a complete whole.

Fig 3 Learning from Experience



As the previous illustrations show, the manager's effectiveness is limited to the extent of the number(s) of faculties developed.

The coach's role is to help managers become **all round learners**, with 'behaviours' developed through actual experience; an ability to put their ideas, observations and reflections into words; and a framework of theory by which they can make sense of what is happening.

Thus equipped they can move smoothly through the learning cycle – testing the theory, modifying their behaviour, discussing the new or changed ideas, and thus broadening or refining the theory.

By learning from their experience they are equipped to cope with change themselves and pass on their knowledge to others.

The Context of Coaching

WHO IS COACHED?

Arguably everyone in the manager's team would benefit from being personally coached by the boss, but a manager cannot usually spare the time to coach every individual. Neither can the manager coach a whole team together as coaching is basically a one-to-one process.

Managers have to direct time and energy to the areas of greatest priority and potential 'pay-off'. This might mean, for example, that systematic coaching could most usefully concentrate on subordinate managers and supervisors, and those people with the potential for such positions. Coaching is an important aspect of *management development* by managers.

Pressure arising from the business's needs, the learners' demands and expectations, and the manager's own personal or departmental priorities, will lead to some individuals or category of learners emerging as key targets for coaching.

It may be useful to work through the following checklist to identify who are the 'priority' learners.

Checklist 2 Priority Learners

1. Who are the managers, supervisors and people with potential in my team?
2. Are there any others temporarily my responsibility while on secondment, traineeship or 'relief'. What expectations do they – and the company have of me?
3. Are any of them newcomers to the firm, to my team and/or to their managerial/supervisory responsibilities?
4. Who are the 'high achievers'? Will they maintain, and extend their achievements? Can I 'broaden' them or set their sights higher still?
5. Have I anyone ready for promotion or increased responsibility?
6. Have I anyone who needs further training or who is getting 'stale'?
7. Who is likely to be my successor? Who deputises for me in aspects of my job and how confident am I of his/her competence?
8. Who most needs to change, and in what way, to meet today's demands and tomorrow's needs in the organisation?

TAKING AND MAKING COACHING OPPORTUNITIES

Coaching, involves 'consciously using work as an opportunity for planned learning'. Sometimes the 'opportunity' will be the starting point and the manager, in deciding who should undertake some task, should have as a first thought 'who would learn most from doing it?' instead of merely 'who could do it most easily?'

Another approach is to start with a 'priority learner' in mind and actively search for, or create, an appropriate opportunity for coaching that person.

Again, the initiative may come from the learner. Every time help or advice is asked for, a complaint made or improvements suggested, the learner may be presenting the manager with coaching opportunities.

This approach may, indeed, be part of the day-to-day management style of the successful manager, certainly, coaching does not necessarily depend on a formal session labelled 'Coaching in Progress'.

Managers will be able to work out for themselves a detailed list of what is likely to apply in their own situations, but the sort of **coaching opportunities** for which managers can be alert are shown in Checklist 3.

"A million managers every day have an opportunity to help their subordinates to develop essential skills – in situations far more realistic and important than management courses, seminars, and so on.

The manager rarely sees himself as a coach yet every time he discusses a problem with a junior colleague and asks the question 'what do you think?' he is unwittingly encouraging for good or bad the development of his colleagues' managerial skills.

The opportunity should not be wasted."

Times leader, 18th October 1971.

Checklist 3 Coaching Opportunities

JOB CHANGE	Promotion. Planned delegation of part of a manager's own job. Restructuring of jobs. Changes in duties, responsibilities and roles. Job rotation (i.e. moving through a number of departments relating to one's work). Secondment (to another firm, branch or quite different function or division of the organisation). Relief coverage for sickness/holidays etc.
SPECIAL PROJECTS	Feasibility studies, piloting or test runs with alternative equipment, materials, systems. Membership of a working party. Developing a new system/product/service/market. Problem solving/'trouble-shooting'. Representing manager on committees etc. Research into improved methods, utilisation of machines, new technology etc.
ROUTINE WORK	Changed systems or procedures. Exceptional employee performance – good or bad. Induction and basic training of staff preceding/following aspects of the formal training system e.g. appraisal; performance rating/target-setting; external courses, and other training activities.

The Coaching Process

STAGES IN THE COACHING ASSIGNMENT

The coaching process does not lend itself to a 'formula' approach that is applicable to all situations.

Success will always depend on the flexibility of the coach in recognising which coaching skills and what *style* of coaching will be most effective.

Most managerial coaching activity probably takes place more or less informally as part of the normal working relationship.

However, to meet the type of specific needs highlighted as appropriate subjects for coaching, or to take conscious advantage of a learning opportunity in the work situation, the successful coach will regard the activity as a planned and purposeful **coaching assignment**.

It is useful to identify five broad phases common to most coaching assignments and to discuss in turn what each may involve.

Fig 4 Stages in the Coaching Assignment

PHASES	CONSIDERATIONS
1. PRELIMINARIES (or pre-coaching preparation)	Information about the learner. Resources. Personal tactics.
2. IDENTIFYING IMPROVEMENT AREAS	Establishing areas for change.
3. ACTION PLANNING	Goals and targets. Timing. Tactics. Records.
4. PROGRESSING THE ASSIGNMENT	Monitoring progress. Giving help where necessary. Reviewing work and learning targets.
5. ROUNDING IT OFF	Confirming new competence. Consolidating new achievement.

The above plan pre-supposes that the coach has identified a 'coaching opportunity' and has a particular learner in mind.

Each of the phases is considered in some detail in the following pages. This detail is not meant to be exhaustive.

However, it should be noted that the various components of coaching do, of course, merge with each other and with the routine activities of the work and the people involved. The sequence of events will frequently vary, as will the degree of importance to be attached to each.

PHASE 1
PRE-COACHING
PREPARATION

Before embarking on the formal coaching assignment, there are a number of issues worth consideration. These are summarised in Checklist 4.

Particularly useful is the area of the learner's past performance, as this could well be used as the 'launch pad' for the assignment – especially if the assignment is aimed at providing help to meet a need highlighted by an appraisal of performance.

Checklist 4 Pre-Coaching Preparation

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
INFORMATION ABOUT THE LEARNER	What evidence is there of current job performance? What information do you have of the learner's background experience?
RESOURCES	Who else needs to be involved in this assignment? – say, to grant access to information. Who else could help in the assignment? Who else needs pre-briefing or needs to give their authority? Are there any implications for the rest of the work group? – in terms of their attitudes or workload? Where is the best place and when is the best time to start? How long will the assignment take and at what pace should it be conducted? Where and when should review sessions be held? Is there a need for extra finance?

Checklist 4 Pre-Coaching Preparation

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
PERSONAL TACTICS	If coaching will be a new experience for the learner, how will you introduce the concept? What sort of coaching style should you adopt for *this* learner on *this* assignment? What sort of relationship already exists between you and the learner? What effect will this relationship have on the assignment?

PHASE 2 IDENTIFYING IMPROVEMENT AREAS

Phase 2 is often the starting point of the coach-learner dialogue, and can also be the most crucial.

It is at this point that the coach is meeting with the learner to introduce the assignment and put it into context for the learner – i.e. to 'float' the idea problem, the need for action on it, and the learner's role in progressing it.

The latter's commitment to the assignment will be high if the coach can allow and assist the learner to take responsibility for both evaluating the 'present state', and identifying improvement areas.

These might be improvement areas in the learner's own performance, or concerned with a specific operational problem.

Moreover because the learner knows that he or she has *identified* the improvement areas, there is far more motivation to want to change, or promote change, than if the coach had identified the same objectives.

Checklist 5 Identifying Improvement Areas

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
ESTABLISHING AREAS FOR CHANGE	Can the learner clearly see the areas for improvement development? How can the coach help the learner identify these areas? Will the learner be truly committed to an interpretation consisting of *only* the coach's observations? Has the *real* problem area been identified? Can the learner diagnose what changes need to be brought about?

PHASE 3
ACTION PLANNING

This phase is concerned with answering the questions 'When and How should objectives be achieved?' and 'How will we recognise that objectives have been met'?

The coach will also need to consider two sorts of objectives – *task* goals and *learning* goals – i.e. what is to be achieved in the job, and what knowledge, skills and personal development is to be attained.

Checklist 6 Action Planning

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
GOALS AND TARGETS	Coach and learner to set task goals stating what is to be achieved in the job, remembering constraints such as time or finance. Coach and learner to set **learning** goals stating a specification of the knowledge, skills or personal development that will be attained and how they can be applied in other situations.
TIMING	How long will it take to achieve the proposed targets? When should work start? Is there a 'critical path' of task elements which have to be completed before others can start or advance? How do assignment targets affect or fit into present work load of manager, learner or others? Do targets affect organisational timetable? Is there compatability or conflict between task and learning priorities? How often will progress be reviewed? How long will reviews take?

Checklist 6 Action Planning

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
TACTICS	How will the learner set about achieving the proposed targets? What ground rules will there be – are there any precedents which need to be observed? Who else can the learner involve or who will be affected? What other resources will the learner require?
RECORDS	How formally and comprehensively does this action planning phase need to be recorded? Will a written record help with future evaluation?

As in Phase 2 there are times when the coach will have to give instructions, information and advice and perhaps take the major responsibility for what is decided.

However, as coaching is essentially about development, and as it is the learner who will be implementing the plan, the coach should try, whenever possible to encourage the learner to take this responsibility.

This means asking the learner for ideas and answers on tactics. It means encouraging the learner to be specific and to consider the implications of future actions. It also means following up with further questions in order to make sure the learner fully understands the reasons and objectives for proposed actions, and is also stimulated to think whether there could be alternatives.

Both Phases 2 and 3 make mention of which party should take the major responsibility. This question is obviously affected by such things as the nature of the improvement/development area and the experience, knowledge and attitudes of both coach and learner.

The time implications can also have a bearing on this matter. Figure 5 points out various styles which the coach may use, dependent upon these above factors.

Fig 5 Coaching Styles

DIRECTIVE ⟶ NON-DIRECTIVE

	A	B	C	D
Phase 2 Identifying Improvement Areas	By coach	By learner	By coach	By learner
Phase 3 Action Planning	By coach	By coach	By learner	By learner

Adapted from 'A Manager's Guide to Coaching' by David Megginson and Tom Boydell. BACIE 1979.

At times overall managerial responsibility for getting things done will outweigh the coaching responsibility to the learner.

Even when the priority is to make the learner take the responsibility and be more self reliant, the coach may have to tell the learner what to do and how to do it **but** the learner should always be encouraged to keep asking 'why'?

PHASE 4 PROGRESSING THE ASSIGNMENT

Phase 4 is a continuing process made up of both informal consultations and formal sessions. The objective is to allow the learner to progress without interference and to encourage self-development – but to help whenever the learner or the situation demands it.

Checklist 7 Progressing the Assignment

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
MONITORING PROGRESS	Use of coach's powers of observation and awareness. Use of coach's inter-personal skills to provide real feedback to learner. Building and supporting the learner's confidence while stimulating the learner's thinking and encouraging experimentation and independence.
GIVING HELP	Intervening only if critical situation is reached. Acting as a learning resource. Acting as a go-between and 'information bank' for the learner.
REVIEWING	Focusing on progress of learner compared to both task and learning goals. Examining how appropriate were initial goals and plans and how effective and valid they are now.

A starting point can be for both parties to summarise the priorities and action plans as established last time, in order to ensure agreement on what is being reviewed.

This can be followed by the learner giving his or her opinions and analysis of what progress has been made.

The coach should be probing and pinning down specifics in order to develop self-understanding and awareness on the learner's part.

The coach needs to make sure that the learner has not only thought through whatever learning the occasion has provided, but also reflected on how it can be applied in future situations.

PHASE 5
ROUNDING IT OFF

Phase 5 is designed to mark the completion of an individual coaching assignment. The coach must now acknowledge the progress that has been made and allow the learner to practice the new skills that have been acquired.

If this cannot be done on a formal basis through either promotion or permanent delegation, then the learner must be sure that he or she will have the opportunity to exercise the new competence as often as possible.

By dealing with more challenging tasks the learner can enhance the image of himself or herself as a learning, developing and growing person.

Checklist 8 Rounding it Off

CONSIDERATIONS	POINTS TO NOTE
CONFIRMING NEW COMPETENCE	Final review of the achievement of both task and learning goals. Coach and learner agreeing on what has been accomplished and how it was brought about.
CONSOLIDATING NEW ACHIEVEMENT	Determining what can be done to make full use of learner's new abilities – say, by coach delegating permanent responsibility to learner for certain tasks.

"All managers depend for their own success on the abilities and skills of their subordinates. Although subordinates can and do learn through experience and by attendance on courses and reading, the manager is the greatest single influence on his subordinates' performance.

Every manager, therefore, is a teacher or coach whether he likes it or not.

The question is not, should managers coach their subordinates but rather, do the managers coach well?"

Edwin J. Singer "Effective Management Coaching".

The Skills Involved

THE MAIN SKILL AREAS

In describing the various phases of the coaching process certain actions and attitudes which will be helpful have already been highlighted.

It is worth emphasising that no two coaching assignments are the same and that it is impossible to dictate or predict exactly the format to be adopted.

Similarly, when it comes to isolating and developing the ***skills*** involved in successful coaching, it is not easy to catalogue all that could be important, or to say which will be most critical and at which stage in the process. In many respects all the skills of coaching are the skills of good management and communication.

However, particularly within the coaching session itself, a number of skills are required in a concentrated way, and it is valuable to focus attention on them so that coaches can be prepared to use them consciously as and when appropriate.

Although the skills are not generally associated with any particular phase of coaching, being important to varying degrees in all phases, nevertheless they do fall fairly naturally into three broad categories.

1. **The skills of 'Drawing Out'**
2. **The skills of 'Attending'**
3. **The skills of 'Giving and Receiving Feedback'**

Each of these broad categories is covered in some detail in the following pages. However, it should be noted that *all* of them need to be exercised in the right 'ambience', or atmosphere.

This is not an easy term to define, but it is concerned with the kind of 'learning' climate in which the learner sees that he or she is being encouraged to learn, rather than being told what to do.

The onus is always on the manager as coach to create the most productive coaching atmosphere and environment – one of trust and confidence based on the coach's sensitivity to the learner, the situation, and the coach's own attitude and behaviour.

DRAWING OUT

Skills under this heading are those concerned with providing a thorough exploration of the issues under discussion, and in particular the learner's attitudes to and perceptions of them.

In recalling the broader reasons for coaching it can be seen that the coach needs to 'draw out', to question, to seek information far more than simply extracting it for its own sake.

Certainly, fact-finding plays an important role in helping the coach to develop a greater understanding of the learner's actions or proposed actions.

However, if the coach is encouraging the development of broader ideas and thoughts, and helping the learner to review implications and examine possibilities, the purpose of questioning takes on an increased importance.

Checklist 9 lists and comments on some of the 'skills' associated with 'drawing out'.

Checklist 9 Drawing Out

SKILL AREA	PURPOSE
PROBING QUESTIONS	Help you to understand the learner's thinking and reasoning.
CHECKING/ CONFIRMING QUESTIONS	Allow the learner to expand on a topic or dwell on details not previously voiced.
CHALLENGING/ PROVOKING QUESTIONS	May help the learner to take a second look at their own ideas and methods, perhaps revise them, or increase personal commitment to them.
PROMPTING/ ENCOURAGING QUESTIONS	Allow the learner to explore a variety of directions before deciding upon a particular form of action.
HOW/WHY/WHAT/ WHERE/WHEN QUESTIONS	Put greater emphasis on the learner to think out issues and answers rather than give simple YES/NO replies.
TIMING THE QUESTIONS	Place the emphasis correctly in terms of when and to what degree.
CONTROLLING	Allows you to direct the flow, pace and direction of the conversation.

ATTENDING

If the coach is to be effective, and helpful, then the importance of both the emotions and the general state of mind of the learner should not be underestimated. This requires close attention to be paid to what is being said, or not said, or otherwise being communicated.

The coach can use certain 'behaviours' to convey attentiveness; for example, good eye contact; 'cueing' the learner with appropriate nods and grunts, facial expressions and prompting words; and leaning slightly towards the learner.

Particularly important are the feelings being expressed, either verbally or non-verbally, by both coach and learner.

Checklist 10 examines some of the 'skills' of attending. Implicit in these are the counter-productive results that can occur if they are *not* exercised, or if the coach indulges in *unhelpful* behaviour – for example, doodling on a piece of paper, fidgeting, yawning, looking at a watch, etc.

Checklist 10 Attending

'SKILL' AREA	PURPOSE
RECOGNISING THE LEARNER'S FEELINGS	To understand the emotions being expressed by the learner either verbally or non-verbally, and let the learner know you are aware of them.
RECOGNISING OWN FEELINGS	To be aware of what they are and the effect they are having on you.
EXPRESSING OWN FEELINGS	To convey to the learner your own reactions.
FOLLOWING UP CUES AND CLUES	To show that you are interested and prepared to listen.
APPLYING SENSITIVITY	To establish empathy, recognise expectations, preconceptions, 'hidden agendas', barriers, etc.
ACTIVE LISTENING	To convey to the learner that you are attentive and therefore interested, concerned, and have respect for the learner and his her problem.
SUSPENDING JUDGEMENT	To show the learner that you have an open mind and avoid the demoralising effects that rapid rejection of an idea can cause.

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Good communication between coach and learner is important at all stages of the coaching process, both for purposes of clarification and joint understanding of what is happening and for identifying the 'interactions' that are taking place.

Sometimes the coach will want to feed back approval or commendation; at other times, lack of approval or criticism. This should always be done in a way that is helpful, so that the learner can use it positively.

A number of aspects of feedback are contained in Checklist 11.

Checklist 11 Giving/Receiving Feedback

SKILL AREA	PURPOSE
CLARIFYING	Ensures that both parties have a common understanding of a particular point.
PARAPHRASING	Enables you to check that you have been listening and to let the learner know that you have been listening.
CONFIRMING	Enables you, if you lose the thread of what the learner is saying, to cover the ground again.
SUMMARISING	Enables you, at any time to reinforce a particularly important aspect, 'mark off' particular areas of conversation, identify stepping stones in related items, and reflect back to the learner the complete message which he/she is sending.
RESPONDING REACTING EVALUATION	Enables the learner to have immediate feedback, whether positive or negative, on your reactions to what he/she is saying or has done.
FINAL SUMMARISING	Enables a clear course of action, understood by both parties, to emerge.

DEVELOPING THE SKILLS

So far this section has been concerned to describe some of the key coaching skills and their values in coaching.

This is not to say these skills are only relevant to coaching; managers will recognise their importance in the selling, instructional, appraisal and counselling, and interviewing situations, and indeed in many encounters between people.

Recognising and being aware of the skills is however only the first step. Developing the skills is equally important and means **practice and evaluation of performance**. The coach needs to evaluate his or her own performance, to be critical of strengths and weaknesses.

If the relationship is strong the learner can often provide feedback of the value obtained in terms of the methods used and the skills that are displayed.

Occasionally, a third party perhaps can be used to supplement the coach's own evaluation but this can lead to hesitation on the learner's part if it happens in the real situation rather than the 'safe' training situation.

The training course can help the coach by providing practice and feedback in a climate designed to stimulate the coach's own self assessment. Experiencing, experimenting and evaluating will all help the coach to develop the skills required.

"Every success I've ever had came about because I was trying to help other people . . . Every promotion I got . . . came about when I was up to my ears helping my associates to be as effective as possible . . ."

Robert Townsend "Up the Organisation".

Postscript

It is not just the learner who benefits from systematic coaching; there are advantages for the manager/coach too.

In the process of coaching, the manager will learn a great deal, for example:

What sort of actions, circumstances, attitudes, etc. create a 'barrier' to learning taking place.

The different ways in which people learn and prefer to learn.

Interpersonal skills, the skills of dealing with people, and how and when to use them.

'Helping' versus 'controlling'.

What helps and what hinders.

Fostering good working relationships.

Not least of the manager's learning will be about him or herself and the way he or she manages!

The skills used in effective coaching, and which through practice are developed and improved, are critical to the success of many managers' fundamental responsibilities – communication, motivation, delegation, planning and monitoring.

As such, they endow benefits far beyond the manager's role as coach – they help the manager *as* a manager – and managing is what it is all about!

Information

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Manual of Self-Development for Managers	M. Pedler; J. Burgoyne; T. Boydell (McGraw Hill, 1977)
Effective Management Coaching	E. J. Singer (Institute of Personnel Management 1977)
Coaching, Learning and Action	Lovin; Casstevens
The Helping Relationship: Process and Skills	L. M. Brammer (Prentice, Hall, 1973)
A Manager's Guide to Coaching	D. Megginson; T. Boydell (B.A.C.I.E., 1979)

TRAINING AIDS

'Coaching for Results'

A pack of two films, 'I Owe You' and 'Paid with Interest' sponsored by the Training Services Division of the Manpower Services Commission, and distributed by Millbank Films Ltd., Thames House North, Millbank, London SW1P 4QS.

Published by the
DISTRIBUTIVE INDUSTRY TRAINING BOARD
MacLaren House, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0FP
Telephone: 061-872 2494

33

10M/821 Printed in England ISBN 0 903416 24 7

END

U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH AND
IMPROVEMENT (OERI)

ERIC

DATE FILMED

JULY 10 1987